

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

STATISTICAL SUMMARY

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS, U. S. D. A.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

April 18, 1952 SS 113

Below Average Supplies of Feed Grains

Feed-grain stocks on farms April 1 were much smaller than average. They were down about one-sixth from a year ago, and down a third from the peak tonnage on hand in April 1949. Per animal unit, the total is the smallest since 1948 and smaller than in all but 2 of the last 15 years.

Corn Stocks Below Average

The 1,068 million bushels of corn on farms compare with 1,323 million a year ago and 1,264 million 10-year average. Farm stocks are the smallest in the past 3 years and smaller than in 12 of the last 15 years.

Oats Stocks Top Average; Barley, Near Average

Oats stocks on farms—516.6 million bushels—are above average but are a little less than a year ago; barley, nearly up to average but considerably less than a year ago.

Farm Wheat Stocks Down From Year Ago

The 201.5 million bushels of wheat on farms compare with 217.1 million a year ago and 226.7 million average. Disappearance of 138 million bushels, January-March, compares with 119 million same quarter year ago, and 150 million for the 10-year average for the quarter. The indicated disappearance of 859 million bushels from farms since harvest is relatively small for this longer period.

Other Grain Stocks on Farms April 1

Rye on farms, 3.4 million bushels; 3.9 million year ago; 4.5 million average. Flaxseed, 8.9 million bushels; 7.3 million year ago; 7.9 million average. Soybeans, 59.6 million bushels; 48 million year ago; 38.7 million average.

Good Prospects for Winter Wheat

Winter wheat production is now estimated at 947 million bushels, about 29 million bushels more than the 918 million bushels forecast in December. Abandonment has been smaller than expected and the crop has survived the critical March period in promising condition.

Abandonment Down Two-thirds From Year Ago

Total abandonment and diversion of wheat acreage this year is indicated at only 5.4 million acres. Last year it was 16 million.

High Yield Per Acre Forecast

The yield forecast for winter wheat, at 16.8 bushels per seeded acre compares with yields of 11.6 bushels last year, 14.1 bushels in 1950, and 15.9 bushels for the 10-year average.

Weather Delays

As in the past two years, March weather was mostly unfavorable for preparation of land and planting of spring crops. But the situation was not regarded as serious in most areas. Early April weather has already helped to rectify the situation. The high degree of mechanization will enable farmers to make rapid progress, once the wet fields dry out enough for them to get started. No estimate is yet available on the mid-April flood damage in the Missouri River Valley, as effects on crops are still undetermined.

Diversion To Corn Likely In Some States

Spring seeding of oats and barley was completed a little late in Oklahoma. In Kansas it was less than half done, and in Nebraska barely started on April 1. This delay may limit oats and barley seedings there and result in a shift to corn and sorghums. In areas farther north there is still ample time for spring seeding.

Shift To Spring Crops in Appalachian Areas

Fall-sown barley has survived about normally, but fall-sown oats have been damaged severely in parts of the Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina area especially where seeding was late. This may result in extensive spring seeding in these parts.

Good Prospects For Fruit

Early reports indicate generally good fruit prospects. Condition of Southern peaches was especially favorable—slightly above average and much better than last year. Some frost damage in Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas but bloom stage has been passed without damage in most of the South.

Pastures About Average; Western Ranges Poor

Pastures are generally better than last year and in nearly average condition. But Western range pastures on April 1 were reported in the poorest condition in 15 years...grazing restricted because of snow in Northern areas, continued dryness in the Southwest, delayed new growth in range areas generally. Ranch cattle and sheep have been kept in fair to average condition by heavier than usual feeding.

Bigger Orange Crop, Smaller Grapefruit Crop

The orange crop at 118.4 million boxes is slightly above the 1950-51 crop of 116.8 million and is 19 percent larger than average. The grapefruit total is placed at

PARITY PRICES FOR FARM PRODUCTS AND ACTUAL PRICES RECEIVED

COMMODITY AND UNIT	ACTUAL PRICE		PARITY PRICE
	Feb. 15 1952	Mar. 15 1952	Mar. 15 1952
Wheat, bu.dol.	2.18	2.20	2.46
Corn, bu.dol.	1.66	1.65	1.78
Peanuts, lb.ct.	10.4	10.5	13.3
Cotton, lb.ct.	37.25	36.72	34.47
Potatoes, bu.dol.	2.05	2.16	1.73
Hogs, 100 lb.dol.	17.20	16.70	21.60
Beef cattle, 100 lb.dol.	27.60	27.60	21.20
Veal calves, 100 lb.dol.	31.90	31.40	23.80
Lambs, 100 lb.dol.	26.80	25.60	23.30
Butterfat, lb.ct.	1/ 80.9	1/ 76.7	76.9
Milk, whsle., 100 lb.dol.	1/ 4.96	1/ 2/ 5.00	4.84
Chickens, live, lb.ct.	25.7	25.0	30.8
Eggs, doz.ct.	1/ 39.8	1/ 39.0	50.8

1/ Adjusted for seasonal variation.

2/ Preliminary.

40.4 million boxes, down from last season by 13 percent and 21 percent less than average. Remaining for harvest on April 1 were 57 million boxes of oranges, compared with 60 million year ago; 17 million boxes of grapefruit, compared with 14 million a year ago.

Orange Marketing Up, Grapefruit Lags

Weekly marketings of Florida oranges reached record volume in March, grapefruit movement continues to lag behind last season. To April 1, fresh shipments of grapefruit totaled 2 million boxes more this year than last, but processors had used 4 million boxes less than last season.

Early Potatoes Better Than Average

Condition of early potatoes in the 10 Southern States and California is about 82 percent of normal. Year ago it was 83; 10-year April average has been 79.

Only Slight Changes in Milk Production

The 9.7 billion pounds of milk produced in March was almost the same as a year ago but lower than for the same month in 7 of the past 10 years. The 10-year average is 9.6 billion pounds. Milk per cow April 1 was relatively high, 17.27 pounds—only slightly below the April 1 rate in the past 2 years but higher than in any prior year.

Egg Production Up—Total And Per Hen

The total of 17.6 billion eggs produced in the first quarter of this year was 7 percent larger than for the same quarter last year and 16 percent above average. Rate of lay also was large for the first quarter—46.7 eggs per hen compared with 44.8 last year and the average of 39.2 for the quarter. March production of 6.4 billion eggs was up 5 percent from both a year ago and average.

Big Increase In Chicks and Young Chickens

Chicks and young chickens of this year's hatching on farms April 1 are estimated at 219.4 million—9 percent more than a year ago. Young chicken holdings were above last year in all regions except the West North Central.

Eggs Average 10 Cents Lower Than Year Ago

Farmers averaged 33.9 cents dozen for eggs in mid-March, compared with 43.7 cents year earlier and 31.6 cents same date 2 years ago.

Chicken And Turkey Prices Also Lower

Chickens averaged 25 cents per pound liveweight, mid-March, compared with 25.7 cents mid-February and 28.9 cents mid-March 1951. Live turkeys in mid-March averaged 34.5 cents per pound. This compares with 36.1 cents in February and 35.3 cents in March 1951.

Poultry Feeding Relatively Unfavorable

The egg-feed price relationship is the most unfavorable in 29 years. Compared with last year, the chicken-feed and turkey-feed price ratios are also very unfavorable. Feed at mid-March cost \$4.24 per 100 pounds, compared with \$4.00 a year ago.

Big Chick Hatch Last Month

The chick hatch in March was near record for the month—291.4 million chicks compared with the record of 293.6 million in March 1944. Hatch year ago, 270.4 million; 1946-50 average, 253.2 million. Demand for broiler chicks was active; for layer flock replacement, weak. Hatches for April and May are expected to be reduced from a year ago.

27 Percent More Turkey Poults

Turkey poults hatched in March were up about 27 percent from a year earlier, and a still greater increase was expected for the April hatch. Forty percent more turkey eggs reported in incubators than in April last year.

Prices Received Lower, Prices Paid Higher Compared With A Year Ago

At 288 percent of 1910-14, prices received by farmers in mid-March were 23 index points or 7 percent lower than a year earlier. The parity index (prices paid, interest, taxes and farm wage rates) on the other hand was 8 index points or 3 percent higher than a year ago (from 280 in March year ago to 288 this March). The parity ratio of course, was at 100 in mid-March, as the index of prices paid (including interest, taxes and farm wage rates) was at 288, same as prices received by farmers.

Farm Income Up For First Quarter

Farmers received a total of about 6.7 billion dollars from marketings in the first 3 months of this year...up about 4 percent from a year earlier. Prices averaged lower but more products were marketed. Receipts from livestock and products were down a little from a year earlier but crop receipts were up about 16 percent.

General Economic Conditions, Steady

Wholesale prices have been easing, and general improvement in the supply situation for many commodities is in the picture. Underlying economic conditions continue strong: increased spending for security, business investments rising, more money spent for new construction, increased volume of seasonally adjusted retail sales.

Civilian Employment Down Slightly, But Fewer Without Jobs Than Year Ago

A total of 59.7 million civilians were at work in March, down one-tenth million from February and a half million from a year ago (Census). Unemployed in March totaled 1.8 million compared with 2.1 million without work a year ago.

CURRENT INDEXES FOR AGRICULTURE

INDEX NUMBERS	BASE PERIOD	March 1952
Prices received by farmers....	'10-14=100	288
Prices paid by farmers, interest, taxes & farm wage rates.	'10-14=100	288
Parity ratio.....	'10-14=100	100
Wholesale prices of food.....	'10-14=100	1/ 287
Retail prices of food.....	'10-14=100	1/ 294
Farm wage rates	'10-14=100	2/ 510
Weekly factory earnings.....	'10-14=100	1/ 583
PRODUCTION COMPARISONS	Jan.-Mar. 1951	Jan.-Mar. 1952
Milk, (bil. lb.).....	27.2	27.2
Eggs, (bil.).....	16.4	17.6
Beef, (dr. wt., mil. lb.).....	3/ 1132	3/1170
Lamb & mutton (dr. wt., mil. lb.)	3/ 86	3/ 100
Pork & lard (mil. lb.).....	3/ 2008	3/2342
All meats (dr. wt., mil. lb.)....	3/ 3309	3/3691
1/ February figure. 2/ April 1 adjusted for seasonal variation. 3/ January to February under Federal Inspection.		